

REMARKS

Please reconsider the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Applicant thanks the Examiner for carefully considering this application, and indicating claims 10-12 are allowable.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 8-18 are pending in this application. Claim 8 is independent. Claim 12 has been cancelled in this reply. The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 8.

Rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C § 102

Claims 8-9 and 14-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,663,512 ("Schader"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 8 has been amended to clarify the present invention recited. Specifically, claim 8 has been amended to include the limitation of allowable claim 12. Claim 8, as amended, recites that the hardface coating is applied to a shirrtail portion, wherein the shirrtail portion is bounded at one end by a shirrtail tip and at the other end by a line passing through a center of the bearing journal and perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the bit body. Schader fails to disclose at least this element and, therefore, cannot anticipate the present invention.

Schader discloses a wear-resistant hardfacing composition comprising granules and matrix metal, wherein at least 60 percent by weight of the composition is granules. Schader discloses that a combination of spherical sintered and cast tungsten carbide pellets yield a hardfacing composition with a good balance between hardness and fracture toughness. Schader fails to show or suggest a hardface coating applied to a shirrtail portion bounded at one end by a

shirrtail tip and at the other end by a line passing through a center of the bearing journal and perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the bit body.

Schader is silent as to using an HVOF process to apply a hardface coating to a shirrtail portion bounded at one end by a shirrtail tip and at the other end by a line passing through a center of the bearing journal and perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the bit body. Thus, Schader fails to disclose or render obvious claim 8, as amended, of the present invention. Claims 9 and 14-18, which depend from claim 8 are likewise patentable. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

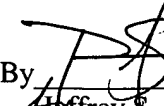
Rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C § 103

Claim 13 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over Schader. Claim 13 depends from claim 8 which has been shown to be patentable over Schader. Therefore, claim 13 is patentable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicant believes this reply is fully responsive to all outstanding issues and places this application in condition for allowance. If this belief is incorrect, or other issues arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned or his associates at the telephone number listed below. Please apply any charges not covered, or any credits, to Deposit Account 50-0591 (Reference Number 05516/091002).

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Respectfully submitted,

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